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**For Immediate Release**

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***Indiana Pays Tribute to Victims and Survivors of  
Domestic Violence***

October 2, 2006 (Indianapolis, IN.) – October is nationally recognized as *Domestic Violence Awareness Month*. The goal of this awareness campaign is for communities throughout Indiana to unite to help end this tragic, yet preventable social crisis.

The purpose of *Domestic Violence Awareness Month* is to remember victims of domestic violence while honoring those who have survived. Throughout the month of October, domestic violence program advocates, survivors, public officials and others will participate in a variety of activities that call attention to this critical issue. Activities often support common themes, but usually focus on events that have affected particular communities.

“Putting an end to domestic violence relies on collaboration among city, state, and community agencies. Re-committing ourselves during *Domestic Violence Awareness Month* is a step in the right direction,” said Mike Cunegin, Executive Director of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute.

The effects of domestic violence are far reaching, often leaving victims of this crime physically, financially and emotionally devastated. According to a June 2005 report by the Department of Justice (DOJ), approximately 1200 women are killed each year by an intimate partner as a result of domestic violence. The DOJ also reports that nearly three-fourths of all domestic violence incidents go unreported because many victims believe that their claims will not be taken seriously by authorities.

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“Eliminating domestic violence from our state requires teamwork,” explained Lydi Davidson, Victim Services division director of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute. “Through the teamwork of individuals, law enforcement, prosecutors, the court system, and victim advocacy, we can work towards the elimination of domestic violence in Indiana. This coordinated response strategy will not only ensure that communities are safer but will effectively reduce the level of violence against women.”

In 1989, the U.S. Congress passed the first Domestic Violence Awareness Month commemorative legislation and has continued to do so every year since. The month of October provides an excellent opportunity for communities to demonstrate support for the elimination of domestic violence and to facilitate assistance to survivors of abuse.

*The Victim Services Division of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute is responsible for implementing programming for crime victims throughout Indiana. The Division is responsible for allocating and managing Federal dollars granted to Indiana from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) and Office on Violence Against Women (OVW).*

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